

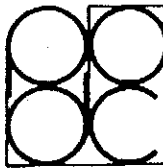
626 E Street, NW (Commercial Building)
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-601

HABS
DC,
WASH
341-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127



PENNSYLVANIA
AVENUE
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION
425 13TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS

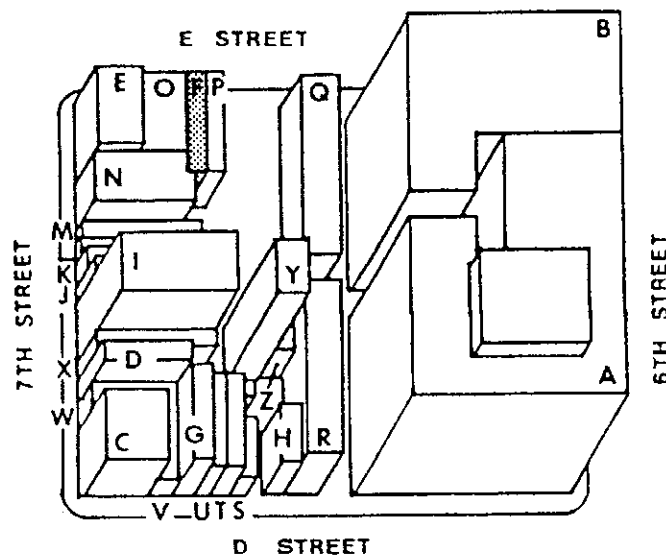
ANDERSON NOTTER/MARIANI
GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT
DEVROUX & PURNELL
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS
DAVID McLAREN HART & ASSOCIATES
PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT
MONK DUNSTONE ASSOCIATES
COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

BUILDING DOCUMENTATION

HABS
DC,
WASH,
341-

Commercial Building
626 E Street, NW
Lot 827



This documentation was produced for mitigation purposes by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Additional documentation exists for Square 457, within which this structure stands. For photographs, historical, and descriptive data on Square 457, see HABS No. DC-597.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The site is located approximately one hundred feet from Seventh Street and is rectangular in shape. The lot is approximately twenty-three feet wide by one hundred feet deep. The building's first floor is rectangular, while the upper two floors have an L-shaped plan to allow for a light and ventilation well at the southwest corner. The building shares party walls with its east and west neighbors. It is the same height, approximately forty-two feet above the sidewalk, as the adjoining building to the east, and approximately three feet higher than the adjoining building to the west. A vertical sign projects from the front facade and extends from the top of the storefront to the top of the third floor windows. The structure is a three-story, three-bay masonry building, with a pressed red brick facade designed in the commercial Italianate style. The second and third stories, as well as the ornate cornice and brackets have remained undisturbed. The ground floor has received an aluminum and glass Art Moderne storefront and entrance in 1940 (Building Permit no. 236697, 9/18/1940). The ground-level restaurant utilizes a large open space towards the street entrance and smaller service areas in the rear. The second and third floors contain partitioned studio and apartment spaces that are reached via a stair and entrance on the west side of the building.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

From an architectural standpoint, this traditional structure is unpretentious, yet it exhibits a fine pressed red brick facade enhanced by an ornate cornice. The materials, proportion, and scale of 626 E Street helps to maintain the integrity of the western half of the block. A construction date between 1860 and 1875 can be inferred from the lack of a recorded building permit. This is corroborated by additional plat data: a building occupies the site on the 1887 Hopkins Plat, but does not appear on the 1857 Boschke map.

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Facade: The second and third floors of the facade are each organized into three bays by three wooden double-hung windows of one-over-one design. The window openings are brick, segmentally arched with a painted stone voussoir as keystone. The window sills appear to be constructed of the same stone material as the keystone. The ornate wood and metal cornice further helps to establish the three bay design. This is achieved through the use of three arched fascia panels separated by four heavy wood fluted brackets which extend

from the top of the third floor window arches to the extreme top of the cornice. The storefront represents a fair example of Art Moderne design utilizing circular and curved design motifs. Curved glass block walls occur on both sides of the restaurant entrance. The showcase itself is constructed of circular and curved plate glass windows and ivory-colored ceramic panels, some of which have been replaced with plywood. All panels have been painted over in battle-ship grey.

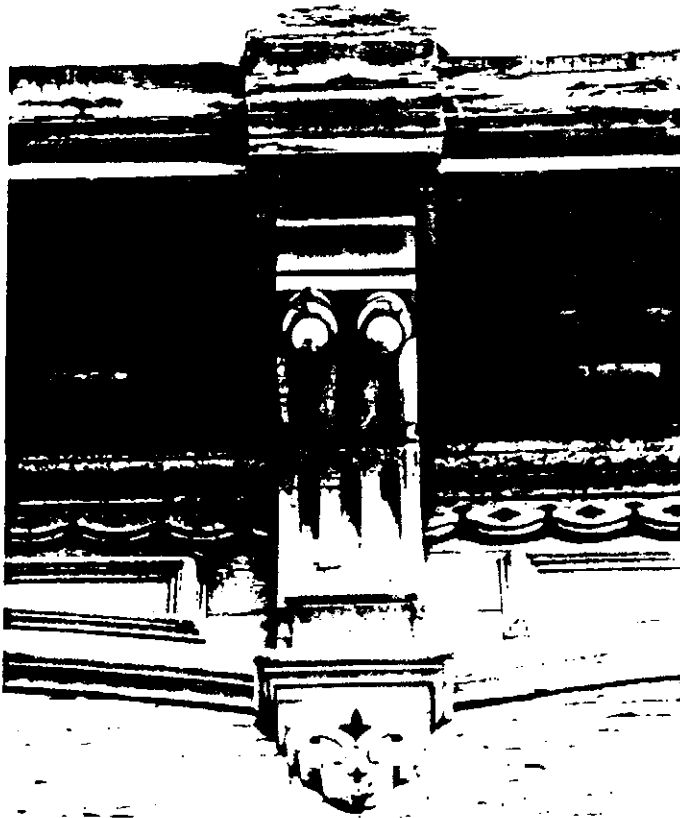
Interior: Towards the rear or south of the building there is an open half-turn stair in wood connecting the second and third floors. The stair, freestanding around an open well on a two-story space has four turns modulated by landings. It is entirely constructed of wood and features open stringers and turned balusters. Above the central well, there is a hipped skylight that illuminates the entire room.

Finishes: Original finishes appear throughout and are interspersed with numerous additions. The upper floors are all three-inch wood planking. Molded wood running boards are still in place. Doors dividing rooms from the main corridors are paneled and carry center-pivoting transom lights.

September 1979



E STREET (NORTH) FACADE



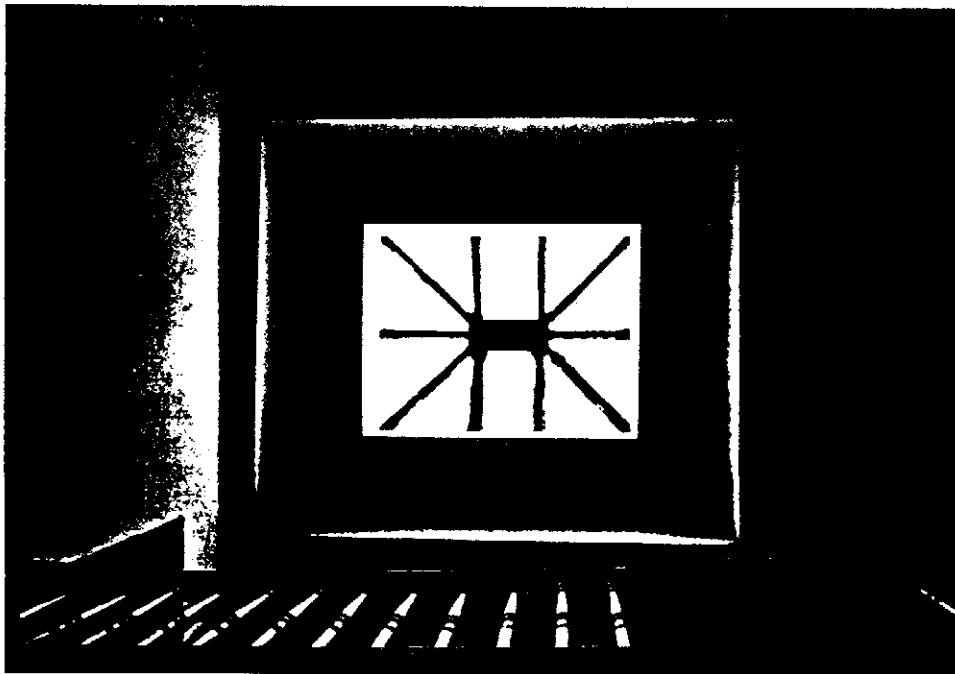
NORTH FACADE: DETAIL
OF CORNICE BRACKET



NORTH FACADE: DETAIL OF CORNICE



STAIR THAT CONNECTS THE
SECOND AND THIRD FLOORS



SKYLIGHT ABOVE STAIR THAT CONNECTS SECOND AND THIRD FLOORS

Lot 15. (Sublots 827, 34)
624, 626, 628 E Street

Lot 15, as platted in the 1872 Bastert Plat Map was rectangular in shape measuring 67 feet along E Street and 100 feet deep. The 1887 Hopkins Plat Map shows the subdivision of Lot 15 into three predominant rectangular lots. By 1903, the westernmost lot integrated with the adjacent Lots 13 and 14. The eastern and central lots became designated Sublot 34 and Sublot 827 and corresponded to 624 and 626 E Street.

- 1819.....Lot 15 was owned by David Bates, John Clancey's heirs and John Canton's heirs. No lot or improvement assessment was given in the District of Columbia Tax Records.
- 1824.....David Bates' heirs were assessed \$331.00 for their part of Lot 15. John Clancey's heirs were assessed \$304.00 for the ground value of their lot, and \$250.00 for the improvements to their property. The remaining part of Lot 15 was assessed to John Caton's heirs for \$268.00, with the improvements assessed at \$355.00.
- 1829/33..Jimmy Pickering took over the ownership of David Bates' section of Lot 15 and was assessed \$551.00 for the lot. Clancey's heirs were assessed \$506.00 for their property, and John Caton's heirs were assessed \$447.00 for theirs. Caton's heirs were also assessed \$300.00 for the improvements to the property.
- 1844.....Raphael Semmes was assessed \$662.00 for a part of Lot 15. John Caton's heirs were assessed \$537.00 and \$608.00 for the remaining two parts of Lot 15.
- 1859.....After this date, the Tax Assessment Records showed a division of Lot 15 into four sublots. These are given individual listings.

Lot 15 (Sublot 827)
626 E Street

1859.....The Central part of Lot 15 was assessed to Leonidas Coyle for \$4,135.00.

1870.....The City Directories list the Sutherland's Shirt Company as a lessee of the building.

1871

to

1885.....John Markriter became the proprietor of Sublot 827 and was assessed \$3,876.00 for the ground.

1878

to

1882.....The physician C. W. Sonnenschmidt was sited as an occupant of the building.

1883/84..The assessment, still in the name of John Markriter, remained at \$3,876.00.

1885

to

1907.....The jewelry manufacturer, Samuel Sawtell, and the broker, Walter J. Watson were co-tenants of 626 E Street as indicated by the City Directories.

1893/94..John Markriter was assessed \$5,355.00 for Lot 827. The improvements to the property were assessed at \$6,000.00.

1899/

1900.....The owner was assessed \$4,365.00 for the lot and \$2,200.00 for the improvements.

1909

to

1919.....The City Directories indicate that the building housed the Cafeteria of the Young Women's Christian Association.

1909

to

1932.....A jeweler, Andrew Nolte was listed under 626 E Street for twenty-four years.

1921

to

1948.....Mrs. Flora Ridgeway was listed as an occupant of the building in the City Directories.

1925

to

1937.....Also listed in the City Directories was Mrs. Mary C. McKeaver as a tenant of 626 E Street.

1927

to

1935.....The Baren's Lunch Room was located at this site for nine years as indicated by the City Directories.

1930

to

1960.....The building continued to house a number of short term tenants during these thirty years. A restaurant apparently was located on the first floor of the structure according to the City Directories.

1944.....On March 3 of this year a permit was issued to install a fire escape in the building (Permit No. 267, 110; cost: \$690.00).

1956

to

1981.....A restaurant under the ownership of Henry Bevans still is in operation today.

SOURCES

Baist Real Estate Atlas

Bastert and Enthoffer Plat Maps

Boyd's City Directories

District of Columbia Building Permits

District of Columbia General Assessment Records

District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds

District of Columbia Surveyor's Office Records

District of Columbia Tax Records

Hopkins Real Estate Atlas

Polk's City Directories

Property Map for Downtown Urban Renewal Area for District of Columbia Redevelopment
Land Agency

Sanborn Insurance Map